



**MINUTES – MEC SPECIAL MEETING  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2015, 12:00 P.M.  
METROPOLITAN EDUCATION COMMISSION,  
930 E. BROADWAY BLVD., TUCSON, ARIZONA**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Bill Ardern, Dr. Mary Jan Bancroft, Dr. Kent Barrabee, James Cook, Jen Darland, Dr. David Dore, George Favela, Guillermo Figueroa, Steve Freeman, Paul Lovelis, Amber Mathewson, Dr. Daisy Rodriguez Pitel, Jennifer Sprung, Dr. June Webb-Vignery, James Wiltbank, Pat Wiedhopf.

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Dr. Linda Arzoumanian, Leshawn Bowen, Deborah Embry, Jennifer Flores, Molly Gilbert, Javier Herrera, Teri Laguna, Rafael Meza, Jo Riester, Regina Romero, Vicky Mullins, Dr. Alan Storm, Dr. Kasey Urquidez, Maggie Zheng.

**NON-COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Edward Nossem, Alexis Huicochea.

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER – PAT WIEDHOPF**

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m.

**2.0 ROLL CALL – PAT WIEDHOPF**

Roll call was conducted; a quorum was established.

**3.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – PAT WIEDHOPF**

The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America was recited by all attendees.

**4.0 ARIZONA LEGISLATURE K-12 FUNDING PLAN – PAT WIEDHOPF**

This meeting was called to discuss and formulate a Statement in response to our Legislature regarding the education budget settlement terms offered by the Arizona Governor, Senate President, and House Speaker to the K-12 funding lawsuit. The issue will be placed on the ballot in May 2016.

The three main topics of discussion were JTED, the “poison pill” provisions included in the settlement terms, and the issue of amending the state’s Constitution. Dr. June Webb-Vignery stated that the MEC’s response should consider what the future holds, and explicitly mention the fact that the settlement would require a constitutional amendment. It should also call for stable and sufficient funding of the JTED program.

Of major concern are provisions in the settlement that are offering to pay 72% of what the judge ordered in ongoing annual funding and half of the back pay owed, paid for by additional withdrawals from education trust funds that are already guaranteed to schools (and requires voter approval at an \$8 million special election that can't be held

before next May, plus possible congressional action), at a rate that puts at risk the future principal of the fund and creates a funding cliff ten years from now that could force future cuts.

Additionally, there are poison pills built into the deal that allow the legislature to not pay inflation costs if job growth or sales tax growth is less than 2% annually. If education spending is ever 49% or more of the state budget, not only is inflation funding not allowed, the education budget can be cut by the amount of inflation money funded the previous year. That percentage can be artificially boosted by intentionally reducing state revenues through tax cuts. There is no provision offered to restore the cuts to JTED and CTE programs, which are currently in a death spiral due to last year's budget axe.

The MEC Statement will address these concerns. The Statement will be drawn up by Dr. Kent Barrabee, Jen Darland, Amber Mathewson, Bill Ardern, and Jim Cook.

5.0 ADJOURNMENT – PAT WIEDHOPF

Motion to approve: George Favela

Second: Jennifer Sprung

Motion carried 15-0. Meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.